

DDA 83-0438

OTE 83-1002

18-6

10 FEB 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and Technology

FROM: Harry E. Fitzwater
Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT: ORD New Initiative: Language School Upgrade

E.H.

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1. [] has told me of the meeting he and other OTE people had with [] and some of his staff on 8 February concerning the proposed ORD New Initiative for the FY 1985 Program relating to the development of an integrated computer-based training system for the Language School. As I understand the nature of this New Initiative, it involves a mixture of research and development projects to systematically approach the application of existing and emerging technologies to language training. If approved, the New Initiative would build on the work to be done on the already funded DCI Production Enhancement project on Language Training Technology. I want to record with you my strong support for this latest ORD New Initiative and to urge that you give it favorable consideration at your upcoming DDS&T Program Review scheduled for 1 March.

2. As you are well aware, the Agency shortage of adequate foreign language skills remains a matter of urgent concern. Even though this year's Language Development Committee Report indicates that we are making some progress in arresting the decline of language capability, there remains a great deal to be done in this area in the coming years. Unfortunately, we will be able to match only very limited increases in personnel resources against this ongoing priority requirement. We have to find ways to substantially increase our training capacity with at best only a slightly augmented teaching staff. I am convinced that computer-based training systems, if geared to our specific and unique needs, would provide this additional capacity. In addition to capacity, Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) offers exciting potential for flexible training approaches permitting language study at home, in employees' immediate offices, and even at overseas locations. I believe that it would be possible for us to develop CAI systems which would not only meet immediate and future language training requirements, but it would also have transferability to other OTE training activities.

SUBJECT: ORD New Initiative: Language School Upgrade

3. If we are to get up to speed on CAI, we must make a systematic and substantial commitment such as proposed by ORD. Their proposed Initiative represents a sound start which warrants the support of us all.

[Redacted Signature]

Harry E. Fitzwater

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cc: D/ORD

Distribution:

Orig - Addee

1 - D/ORD

2 - DDA (w/Project Background Info)

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1 - OTE Registry

D/OTE, [Redacted] 9Feb83

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Executive Summary

ORD New Initiative: Language School Upgrade

8 February 1983

Requirement: Language School has insufficient resources to meet steadily increasing foreign language training requirements.

Approach/Product: Develop integrated computer-based training system which applies existing and emerging technologies to specific training tasks to augment instructor resources.

Scope of Proposed Program:

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Technical Plan: Mixture of research and development projects, including experimental courseware development, exploratory research, and technology development directed at Agency-unique training requirements. These projects will be evaluated, refined, and used by students and instructors in a Training Technology Laboratory. Projects may include intelligent games for language instruction, foreign language videodisc training systems, natural language comprehension systems, and novel training techniques for low aptitude language students.

Status: ORD New Initiative, which is awaiting DDS&T review on 1-3 March. This program is competing with other Directorate submissions to become a DDS&T proposed new initiative. This proposed program will enable us to exploit the outcome of the DCI Production Enhancement project on Language Training Technology funded for FY 84 and FY 85.

Action Requested: Letters of support to DDS&T prior to 1 March meeting.

ORD New Business Program Manager:

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Language School Point of Contact:

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Proposed Initiative X
 Alternative I
 Alternative II

NEW INITIATIVE
 (Submit for Each New Initiative)
 (Thousand of Then-year Dollars)

Directorate DDS&T
 Expenditure Center ORD
 Target 460XX
 Category General Support

(N) - Nonrecurring Costs
 (R) - Recurring Costs

PROJECT NAME	FY-85	FY-86	FY-87	FY-88	FY-89	STAT
Language School Upgrade						
Positions	3 (2 ORD, 1 OT&E)	1 (OT&E)	1 (OT&E)			

Description/Benefits:

This new initiative will upgrade the Agency's foreign language training capability by developing a prototype instructional system for the Language School based on the Agency's unique language training requirements. In contrast to this proposed upgrade of the Language School capabilities, ORD's DCI Production Enhancement Project for FY-84 and FY-85, Advanced Techniques for Language Training, will focus on high-risk, technologically innovative research to explore the application of emerging technologies to language training. Funding for this proposed Language School initiative to upgrade foreign language training is critical to provide an integrated, Agency-unique prototype system of language training tools. Although the FY-84 and FY-85 DCI Production Enhancement will fund several innovative concepts in training technology, which will have a positive impact on the Agency's language training process, without funding for this new initiative we will be unable to improve the Language School's programs in a systematic, comprehensive manner.

The Language School has received steadily increasing requests for training over the past several years. However, they have not received a corresponding increase in resources to meet these requests. Therefore, it is imperative that they make the most effective use of their limited number of native-speaking instructors.

Current language training techniques used by the Agency make it increasingly difficult to meet projected training needs of the future. While managing a standard foreign language curriculum, the Language School must respond to ad hoc training requests, which account for approximately 50 percent of the language training provided by the School. These ad hoc training requirements frequently result in inefficient use of instructor time by requiring new classes for only one or two students. Instructors are burdened with low-level rote training tasks which waste their skills and are further hampered by administrative tasks of testing and recordkeeping. While students spend a good deal of time outside of the classroom in self-study, the training materials available to them cannot provide directed feedback and remedial recommendations, as an instructor might.

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Positions	3 (2 ORD, 1 OT&E)	1 (OT&E)	1 (OT&E)			

Description/Benefits (Continued):

This proposed new initiative will apply computer-based training techniques to language training at the Agency. Existing technologies enable development of portable, interactive training materials which can provide feedback and diagnostic recommendations while automatically evaluating and recording student achievement. Such techniques will enable more effective use of valuable instructor time and will improve the effectiveness of study time outside of the classroom.

In FY-85, ORD will analyze the language training process currently used by the Agency. We will assess candidate technologies to determine whether they may be appropriately used to augment instructor time for training different types of language skills (e.g vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, conversation, etc.). A hands-on training Technology Laboratory will be set up at the Language School; instructors and students will evaluate state-of-the-art instructional courseware, hardware, and software in this Laboratory.

Also in FY-85, this initiative will support three different types of research projects, a mixture of experimental courseware research, exploratory research, and technology development research; this research will continue through FY-89. Research on experimental courseware will develop prototype language training materials specific to the Agency's foreign language requirements. Exploratory research will focus on theoretical and practical issues relevant to language training systems, including research on acquisition of foreign language skills and techniques for natural language comprehension by machines. Technology development research will adapt promising technologies to specific problems in language training, such as automatic voice recognition systems for pronunciation training.

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Directorate DDS&T
 Expenditure Center ORD
 Target 460XX
 Category General Support

(N) - Nonrecurring Costs
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NEW INITIATIVE
 (Submit for Each New Initiative)
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PROJECT NAME

Language School Upgrade

	<u>FY-85</u>	<u>FY-86</u>	<u>FY-87</u>	<u>FY-88</u>	<u>FY-89</u>
Positions	3 (2 ORD, 1 OT&E)	1 (OT&E)	1 (OT&E)		

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Shortfalls Addressed:

Without this work to develop a computer-based foreign language training system for the Agency:

1. The Language School will have to meet increased training requirements by increasing the number of instructors, or be forced to sacrifice quality of instruction.
2. Students' study time will be limited in effectiveness because existing training materials cannot provide feedback and are not portable; thus, language training will be limited by the availability of instructor time.
3. Language skills of Agency personnel will decay without access to instructors.
4. Existing training commitments will hamper quick response to new, ad hoc training requirements.

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2.	ADDA	<i>[Signature]</i> 11 FEB 1983
3.	DDA (For Signature)	
4.		
5.		
Action	File	Note and Return
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As Requested	For Correction	Prepare Reply
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Coordination	Justify	

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